

PRISONERS OF POVERTY.

WOMEN WAGE-WORKERS, THEIR TRADES AND THEIR LIVES.

BY HELEN CAMPBELL.

Copyright, 1866.

In that antiquity which we who only are the real men look back upon as the elder world, counting those days as old which were but the beginning of the time we reckon, there were certain methods with workers that centuries ago ceased to have visible form. The Roman matron, whose susceptibilities from long wear and tear in the observation of fighting gladiators and the other mild amusements of the period were a trifle blunted, felt no compunction in ordering a disreputable or otherwise objectionable slave into chains, and thereafter claiming the same portion of work as had been given untrammeled. The routine of the day demanded certain offices, but how these offices should be most easily fulfilled, was no concern of master or mistress, who required simply fulfillment, and wasted no time on consideration of methods. In the homes of Pompeii, once more open to the sun, the underground rooms where wretched men and women bowed under the weight of fetters, whose corrosion was in not only weary flesh but the less weary soul, and Rome itself can still show the same remnants of long-forgotten wrong and oppression.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfilled.

"What more would you have?" cries the believer in things as they are. "What is higher or finer than the beautiful spirit that has taken permanent form in brick and mortar? Never since time began has charity been on so magnificent a scale; never has it been so intelligent, so far-seeing. No saint of the past were ever more vowed to good works than these unanointed saints of to-day who give their lives to the poor and faint until lost. Shame on man or woman who questions the beautiful work or dares hint that under this fair surface rotteness and all foulness still seethe and smite."

It is not easy in the face of such feelings to affirm that, perfect as the modern system may be, beautiful as is much of the work accomplished, it still is wanting in one element, the lack of which has power to vitiate the whole. No good will, no charity, however splendid, fills or can fill the place occupied by that need which is forever first and most vital between man and man—justice. No love, no labor, no self-sacrifice even, can balance that scale in which justice has no place. No knowledge nor wisdom, nor any understanding that can come to man counts as farce in the universe of God! till that one word beats the issue of all that must be known, and loved, and lived before ever the Kingdom of Heaven can begin upon earth.

It is because this is felt and believed, by a few as a controlling power, by many as a dimly comprehended need, so far in the shadow that its form is still unknown, that I begin to-day the search for the real presence. What I write will be no hateful lecture of the helged-in lives the conditions of which I began, many years ago, to study. If names are withheld, and identities not always indicated, it is not because they are not recorded in full, ready for reference or any required corroboration. Where the facts make against the worker, they are given with minute detail as where they make against the employer. The one aim in the investigation has been and is to tell the truth, simply, direct, and in full, leaving it for the reader to determine what share is his or hers in the evil or in the good that the methods of to-day may hold. That our system of charities and corrections is unsurpassable does not lessen the case of the worker who wants no charity and needs no correction. It is something beyond either that must be understood. Till the methods of the day are analyzed, till ours has defined justice, asked what claim it makes upon the personal life of man and woman, and mastered every detail that can render definition more possible, the questions that perplex even the most conservative can have no solution for this generation or for any generation to come. To help toward such solution is the one purpose of all that will follow.

In the admirable report of the Bureau of Statistics of Labor for 1855, made under the direction of Mr. Charles Peck, whose name is already the synonym for careful and intelligent work, the number of working women in New York is given as very nearly two hundred thousand. Investigations of the same nature have been made at other points, notably Boston, in the work of Mr. Carroll D. Wright, one of the most widely known of our statisticians. But neither Boston nor any other city of the United States offers the same facilities or gives us varied a range of employment as is to be found in New York, where grinding poverty and fabulous wealth walk side by side, and where the "life limit" in wages was established long before modern political economy had made the phrase current. This number does not include domestic servants, but is limited to actual handicrafts. Ninety-two trades are given as standing open to women to-day, and several have been added since the report was made. A lifetime would hardly be sufficient for a detailed examination of every industry in the great city, but it is quite possible to form a just judgment of the quality and character of all those which give employment to women. The city which affords the largest percentage of habitual drunkards, as well as the largest number of liquor saloons to the mile, is naturally that in which most women are forced to seek such means of subsistence as may be had.

The better paying trades are filled with women who have had some form of training in school or home, or have passed from one occupation to another, till that for which they had most aptitude has been determined. That, however, to which all the more keep turn at once, is the one thing about the doing of which there can be no doubt or difficulty, is the one most overcrowded, most underpaid, and with its scale of payments lessening year by year. The girl too ignorant to reckon figures, too dull-witted to learn by observation, takes refuge in sewing in some of its many forms as the one thing possible to all grades of intelligence and the woman with drunken or otherwise vicious husband, helpless often than the widow who turns in the same direction, seeks the same sources of employment. If respectably dressed and able to furnish some reference, employment is often found by her in tailors or some large establishments where regular workers have place. But if, as is often the case, the need for work arises from the death or the evil habits of the natural head of the family, fortunes have sunk to so low an ebb that often the only clothing left is the back of the worker, in the last stages of demoralization, and the sole method of securing work is through the middle-men or "sweaters," who ask no questions and require no reference, but make as large a profit for themselves as can be wrung from the helplessness and the bitter need of those with whom they reckon.

The difficulties to be faced by the woman whose only way of self-support is limited to the needle, whether in machine or handwork, are fourfold: (1) Her own inexperience must very often head the list and prevent her from securing her-class work; (2) middle-men or sweaters lower the price to starvation point; (3) contract work done in prisons or reformatories brings about the same result; and (4) she is underbids from still another quarter, that of the country woman who takes the work at any price offered.

These conditions govern the character and quality of the work obtained, even the best firms being somewhat affected by the last two clauses. And in every trade there may always be found three di-

FROM MANY POINTS OF VIEW.

CHATS WITH NEW-YORKEERS AND WITH VISITORS TO THE CITY.

General James W. Husted thinks he got the best of Chasney M. Depew the other day. The General was talking with ex State Senator Gibbs when Mr. Depew came into the room and said: "Well, here is a pair, the wicked Gibbs and the dethroned Husted." The General retorted: "The modest Depew makes a three of a kind."

Frank Siddall, of Philadelphia, who is known as one of the heavy advertisers of the country, is often in New-York. I was discussing advertising methods with him recently and remarked that I had never seen any of his advertisements on rocks and buildings. His manager replied: "Well, he's a fool, but he's got money, and advertising entitles to newspapers. The man who does not read a newspaper does not use soap."

The nomination of S. V. White for Congress in one of the Brooklyn districts, made something more than the mere sending of that earnest Wall Street man to Washington. W. H. Barker, who is thoroughly alive to Brooklyn politics, said this about it yesterday: "Mr. White has been interested in politics in 1854. He never took hold of anything that he does not go into it with his whole soul. He will not stop with the assistance of the Congressional nomination, but will make his influence felt in every direction for the success of the Republican Kings County politics. In State politics and in Brooklyn politics." His nomination means a new deal in Brooklyn politics."

In the Republican County Committee headquarters the other day Russell B. Harrison, of Mount Pleasant, was shaking hands with Theodore Roosevelt and exuding his best wiles as for the successful issue of his plan for the Mayoralty. Mr. Harrison is secretary of the Cutt Grovers' Association of Montana, and Mr. Roosevelt is a member of the Board of Directors. This board takes cognizance of infractions of the cattle laws and acts as a governing power to prevent violations of the laws. Harrison remarked that he thought it would be a great time for New-York City to have cowboy rule for a couple of years. Said he: "I am a westerner myself, and I am a good one, and I am willing to do my best to see that the cattle laws are enforced. The cattle law is the best law in the country."

Judge Newell Davis, who successfully supports Theodore Roosevelt for Mayor, was quizzing a reporter to refer to the difference between Mr. George and Mr. Heitman. The former is less anxious than the latter. A man with theories would be less harmful in the Mayoralty than a man backed by 10,000 "thieves" who have plundered the city of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

"What more would you have?" cries the believer in things as they are. "What is higher or finer than the beautiful spirit that has taken permanent form in brick and mortar?" Never since time began has charity been on so magnificent a scale; never has it been so intelligent, so far-seeing. No saint of the past were ever more vowed to good works than these unanointed saints of to-day who give their lives to the poor and faint until lost. Shame on man or woman who questions the beauty of the clothing trials, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it is admitted that there are defects here and there, and that much remains to be remedied, we are pointed with pride to the magnificent institutions of modern charity, where every possible want of all sorts and conditions of men is met and fulfills.

That day is over, and well over, we say. Only for a few barbarians still unreached by the march of civilization is any hint of such conditions possible, and even for them the days of darkness are numbered. And so the century moves on; and the few who question if indeed the bonds are quite broken, if civilization has civilized, and if men and women may claim in full their birthright of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are set down as hopeless carpers, unpleasant, pragmatic, generally disagreeable objectors to things as they are. Or if it